

Appl. No. 10/817,588
Response to Office Action mailed April 19, 2005

Atty Dkt. No. 114216-011

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action was issued on pending claims 1-7. Claims 1-7 stand rejected. In this Response, claims 1-5 and 7 have been cancelled without prejudice, claim 6 has been amended and claims 8-9 have been added. Thus, claims 6 and 8-9 are pending in the application.

Applicants invite the Examiner to call Applicants' Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

The Office Action at paragraph 4 rejects claims 1-7 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Document No. 2000166616. The Office Action at paragraph 5 rejects claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Chao (US 2003/0145439 A1). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 6 has been amended to include claim 7 and claim 7 has been cancelled. The amendment to claim 6 also clarifies that the bridge extends around the tip end of the guide bar at the central part thereof without contacting the tip end of the guide bar. Claims 8 and 9 have been added which correspond to claims 4 and 5 respectively, but depend from claim 6. Claims 1-5 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Amended claim 6 calls for "the bridge extends around the tip end of the guide bar at the central part thereof without contacting the tip end of the guide bar." (emphasis supplied). Fig. 3 shows an example of this claimed feature. The bridge 30 extends around the tip end of the guide bar 23 at the central part thereof. The bridge 30 does not contact the tip end of the guide bar 23.

Turning to JP '616, JP '616 is discussed in the DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART section of the Applicants' specification at pages 1-3. JP '616 simply does not have a bridge that extends around the tip end of a guide bar without contacting the tip end of the guide bar. Rather, JP '616 shows in Fig. 5 engage parts 15 which are mutually connected by second elastic pieces 18 at an end of member 19.

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Applicants' invention can provide advantages. As discussed at page 5, lines 18-25 of Applicants' specification, when the lock arm is overextended, the bridge is flexed and contacts the tip end of the guide bar thereby restricting overextension of the lock arm. At this time, if the tip end of the guide bar is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the both end of the bridge, the bridge can restrict overextension of the lock arm while bending. That is, the bridge is further bent to reduce pressing force under ordinary condition and to restrict overextension of the lock arm in an earlier step of its deformation. Further, an adjustment of the contacting position with the tip end of the guide bar can control the timing to restrict overextension.

As to Chao, claim 6 was not rejected in view of Chao.

Dependent claims 8 and 9 are allowable at least for the reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Thus, Applicants submit that the rejections should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

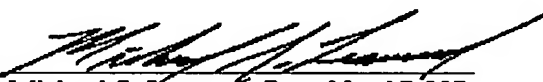
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and request a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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